

59. The face mask of claim 57 wherein said ferroelectric material comprises a perovskite.

60. The face mask of claim 58 wherein said ferroelectric material comprises a perovskite.

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61. The face mask of claim 59 wherein said ferroelectric material is selected from the group consisting of barium titanate, lead titanate and solid solutions thereof.

62. The face mask of claim 50 wherein said ferroelectric material is selected from the group consisting of tungsten bronzes, bismuth oxides and pyrochlores.

63. The face mask of claim 57 wherein said fibers comprise a polyolefin and have a diameter between 0.1 and about 10 micrometers.

64. The face mask of claim 58 wherein said nonwoven web comprises a meltblown fiber web.

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66. The face mask of claim 57 wherein said nonwoven web comprises a spunbond fiber web.

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67. The face mask of claim 63 wherein said ferroelectric material has a longest dimension less than about 10 micrometers.

[Please amend the claims as follows:]

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9. (Second Amendment) [A] The face mask of claim 50 wherein said thermoplastic polymer fibers comprise multicomponent [fiber comprised of] fibers having two or more components, each of which is comprised of a thermoplastic polymer; and
[primary particles of a] wherein ferroelectric material is dispersed [therein] within at least one of said components forming said multicomponent fibers at a level from about 0.1 to about 50% by weight, based on the weight of the fiber [; in which the fiber

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has been exposed to an electric field in order to reorient the spontaneous polarization of the ferroelectric particles].

10. (Once Amended) The [multicomponent fiber of] face mask of Claim 9, in which the particles of a ferroelectric material are present at a level of from about 0.01 to about 50 percent by weight, based on the weight of the fiber.

12. (Once Amended) The [multicomponent fiber of] face mask of Claim 9, in which the particles of the ferroelectric material have a longest dimension in a range of from about 10 nanometers to about 10 micrometers.

13. (Once Amended) The [multicomponent fiber of] face mask of Claim 9, in which the ferroelectric material is selected from the group consisting of perovskites, tungsten bronzes, bismuth oxide layered materials, and pyrochlores.

14. (Once Amended) The [multicomponent fiber of] face mask of Claim 13, in which the ferroelectric material is barium titanate.

15. (Once Amended) The [multicomponent fiber of] face mask of Claim 9, in which the multicomponent fiber is a bicomponent spunbond fiber [in which the two components are arranged in a side-by-side configuration].

16. (Once Amended) The [multicomponent fiber of] face mask of Claim 9, in which the multicomponent fiber is a bicomponent meltblown [fiber in which the two components are arranged in a sheath-core configuration].

50. (Once Amended) A face mask comprising [the] a nonwoven web of [Claim 20] thermoplastic polymer fibers wherein said thermoplastic polymer fibers have ferroelectric material dispersed therein and further wherein said fibers have been exposed to an electric field in order to reorient the spontaneous polarization of the ferroelectric material.
